

I-202 Renee Humphrey

Comment Letter 202

From: R Humphrey <renee.humphrey3@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 14, 2017 1:50 PM
To: renee Humphrey
Subject: RE: NEWLAND SIERRA DRAFT EIR

This letter is addressed to all who have the power in their hands to save us.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Newland Sierra Development.

I *have* attached a list of concerns, but I imagine that many, if not all of the emails and letters you have received have included these concerns. They are all legitimate issues, but I wanted to write to you from the human side of this issue. This is going to be long, and I apologize, but I am fighting for our lives here. Literally fighting for our lives, when you think of the fire danger.

My parents moved to Champagne Village in 1982. They retired here, after living in many cities their entire lives. They were looking for a quiet, safe place to spend the later years of their lives. And living here did indeed start out that way. Being so close to my parents, I visited a lot over the years, at least every few weeks. So I have had an up close view of the changes that have happened already, and how they have impacted the area in a negative way. By the way, my parents passed away in 2012, and now I am the one living here. So all of the Newland plans will directly impact my life.

Yes, we live in a rural area. But it is not the quaint, quiet, peaceful, safe life one would imagine. Those of us opposed to the Newland project are desperately trying to hold on to the remaining piece of rural life that is left to us.

Let's start with the biggest worry, fire. It used to be that we worried about fire three months out of the year, in the hot summer months. Now, we worry about fire year round. Once the 15 freeway went in, we have had more and more fires, whether due to a car catching fire, and then spreading to land, arson, a careless smoker, (that happened last month,) or a catalytic converter. Then add in the fact, (whether you believe it or not,) that our climate *has* changed. It used to be much cooler. Now we have up to five months on end of 90 plus degree weather. Everything that used to be green and lush around here is now brown, dried out and dead.

The fire of 2007, the one where over half a million people had to evacuate San Diego County, is a prime example of why we cannot have more homes, people and traffic in this area.

Even with all the planning of fire departments, counties, cities, you name it, we were given a 30 second warning to get out of our house. I had a bad feeling days before, so thankfully we were packed up and ready to go. But go where? Every day, as the fires

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got larger, escape routes would change. One day, if we got a call to get out, we would have had to go south. Another day, the southbound traffic was closed and we would have had to go north. It changed, day after day. The day of our 30 second warning, we were directed north. It took us 35 minutes to get from Champagne Village to the Gopher Canyon on-ramp to the 15 north. That drive normally takes about five minutes. Oh, our reverse 911 call that we were supposed to get to tell us to get out? It came, about 40 minutes after we had left the house.

If a fire had been on top of us, I wouldn't be sitting here writing this letter to you. We would have been killed, while sitting in our cars, while stuck in gridlocked traffic.

There are only two ways out of this entire area. North or south, on the 15 freeway. Sure, we have Champagne Blvd., but it would be as gridlocked as the freeway, and depending on where a fire might be, it wouldn't matter how many roads or lanes we had.

Either late last year, or early this year, (all the fires tend to run together, as we have quite a few,) we had yet another fire on the 15 freeway. Actually, it was five different spots that were on fire, and the fire crews were all over the place. At one point, we did get the call to evacuate. And we all just sat and looked at each other and said "where would we go?" The 15 had been shut down, Champagne Blvd. was at a total stand-still, due to traffic from the 15 off-loading onto Champagne Blvd., so we all decided to just sit. And possibly die. There was no where to go, no way out. NO WAY OUT. I need for you to understand that.

We are in a rural area. There are only a few roads, and they ALL lead to the 15 or Champagne Blvd.

There is *no room* for more cars, more people, more houses, in this area. It is not the place to be building. Building more roads isn't going to help. You can build more roads, but you will be putting more cars onto them, and we will be right back where we started, gridlock and fires. There is no way to make this fact go away. It is a fact. We are already living in a dangerous place. We know it. It wasn't this way when we moved here. Population growth, the 15 freeway itself, (which wasn't here in 1982,) more traffic on the 15 freeway, climate change, it has all factored in to a very dangerous place to live.

Put very simply, there is one pro to the Newland situation. The developers will make money. That is the ONLY pro. The cons are staring us in the face on a daily basis to begin with, and the Newland project will only add to them.

I want to ask a question. Have any of you been in this area of the state long enough to know what Temecula used to look like? Many years ago, it was just green, rolling hills, a few wineries, old town, and that was it. Go look at it now. Concrete, for as far as the eye can see. And two, count them, two on/off ramps to serve the entire area. That is the future of our rural area if you allow Newland to destroy our community.

When the 15 freeway went in, we lost deer migration, we lost cougar migration, we lost roadrunner migration. What more will we lose with Newland?

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Comment Letters

When the 15 freeway went in, we lost the ability to hear the birds singing in the trees, to hear crickets chirping away at night. The noise from the freeway is horrible. The dust and dirt that blows into our houses from the freeway is horrible. What more will we lose with Newland?

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When the 15 freeway went in, the military decided that they would use the freeway as their GPS system. We have constant noise from military helicopters. Toss in the noise from Camp Pendleton when they do what I call 'bombs bursting at night' for days and nights on end. Our homes shake and rattle. What more will we lose with Newland?

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In the past year, three bodies have been found within a mile or so of my home, people who were murdered and left on the side of the road. Weekly, you can hear gunfire on the south side of the 15 freeway. Someone is up in those hills, shooting guns, illegally, according to the sheriff department, and nothing is done about it. What more will we lose with Newland, when they bring in even more people?

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I could keep writing, there is so much more. But this is far too long as it is. I hope and pray you read it all anyway.

With all of my heart, I tell you that appreciate your taking the time to read this letter. The lives of so many people are in your hands. Please make the decision that will allow us to remain safe, and in our *rural* homes. Let the Newland Developers go elsewhere and build in a place that makes sense for everyone, and not just so it makes cents for them.

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Most sincerely,

Ms. Renee Humphrey
8975 Lawrence Welk Dr, Space 317
Escondido, CA 92026-6419
(Resident of Champagne Village Mobile Home Park)

After reviewing the document, I have a list of questions and concerns outlined below:

● **CONCERNS** (See attached list of outstanding issues.)

After 10 years of meetings between County residents and staff, not to mention the millions of the dollars spent on the development of General Plan, the County Board of Supervisors approved the County's General Plan. When the plan was approved, this Supervisors not only agreed this area to protect this area from over-development, but they agreed to downzone the entire property to 99 units from 200 units. In an effort to support and respect the integrity provisions of the General Plan, *I urge you to recommend against the Newland Development and continue to safeguard this sensitive rural corridor.*

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ISSUE AREAS:

Wildlife Connectivity

- The project is proposed in a sensitive area; if developed, critical north/south and east/west wildlife corridors would be severed.
- Newland Sierra has sought special treatment, or a “carve out” of the regional biological mitigation plan, before the plan has even been adopted by the County and federal and state wildlife agencies.

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Cultural Resources

- The project would impact significant cultural resources, particularly by expanding Deer Springs Road – including a site with Native American human remains.

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Traffic

- Newland Sierra would generate 28,000 new trips per day to our local roads.
- Newland Sierra brings I-15 traffic to level “F” since no new freeway lands and no new transit infrastructure is proposed.
- Newland Sierra proposes to widen Deer Springs Road to six lanes and build a new I-15 interchange, drawing thousands of cut-through commuters. Yet, Newland plans to start building before CALTRANS finishes its analysis and approval of a re-designed interchange at Deer Springs Road and I-15

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Water

- The Vallecitos Water District projects a water supply deficit for the next 20 years. • The District’s Water Supply Assessment requires a 36% water supply cut to existing customers in order to serve the Newland Sierra development.

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Fire

- Newland Sierra is proposed in a “Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone.”
- Newland Sierra does not provide enough emergency access routes in the event of a fire. Gridlock during an evacuation would compromise the safety of the entire region.

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Planning/Smart Growth

- The County Board of Supervisors spent millions of dollars and 10 years developing a General Plan that protected, in fact downzoned, this area. A few years ago the Board of Supervisors voted to approve the plan and protect this area from development.

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GHG

- The County has not completed its Climate Action Plan, therefore the County should not consider Newland Sierra until it’s done.
- The Golden Door and Sierra Club recently won a trial court decision invalidating the County’s threshold for measuring greenhouse gas “GHG” impacts.

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